



c.31 – population, immigrants, refugees

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1897 06 21

Such has been the general progress during the Victorian era that it is difficult from the point of view of today to recall the Cambridge of 1837. In the year of her Majesty's accession but few houses stood on the marshy spot which we now know as the populous district of New Town. There were a few residents in Newnham and some scattered dwellings in the neighbourhood of New-square while beyond on the Newmarket-road lay Barnwell of historic note. Chesterton, as a part of Cambridge, was confined to the outgrowth of the town in the neighbourhood of Castle Hill and a plan of the town stops short at the Mill-road corner of Parker's Piece. In 1837 the population would be about 21,000. Recently it has been estimated at over 50,000.

1898 09 03

Cherry Hinton is the meeting place of the old and new; a study in contrasts. St John's ward contains trim villas, modern residences, and a population increasing rapidly year by year. On the other hand, St Andrew's ward is intensely rural, the scene of scattered dwellings and old thatched gables. In short, St John's is suburban, while St Andrew's yet retains its agricultural character. Thus a drainage scheme is less needed in the latter than the former and the inhabitants of St Andrew's insist that they will have none of it, while in the former it has long been common knowledge that emphatically "something must be done", and that quickly, for the constantly growing population

1898 10 27

The population of the town of Cambridge has increased very much during the past 10 years, especially in the Petersfield and Romsey town area. Up till 10 years ago the chancel of the present St Barnabas Church was the only place of worship in the extensive district. Mainly by reason of the enterprise of Mr Sturton in providing land for building purposes, the district became so large that it became necessary to carry out the building of the complete Church; this was done in 1887. The substitution by the Great Eastern Railway Company of a handsome bridge for the old level crossing in Mill Road gave a great impetus to building in what is now Romsey town and the church of ease of St

Phillip's was established. Now the time has come for Romsey town to be raised to the status of an ecclesiastical Parish, with St Phillip's as the parish church

1899 07 11

Sir – The population of Chesterton is mainly composed of people who have been turned out of Cambridge to make way for college and other improvements, and nearly all are employed in that ancient town. Every day brings evidence of the great need of another crossing of the Cam & that Abbey Road is the place goes without saying. The De Freville Estate, are absolutely dependent upon the old punts and other obsolete marine structures for crossing over to Cambridge. . It must be conceded that a bridge over this part of the Cam is of the highest importance – “Chestertonian”

1900

1902 07 16

Sir – if Cambridge and Chesterton are excluded from the County Council it will become a superfluous organisation whose few remaining functions could well be carried out by the Rural Councils. The loss of revenue would impose upon the rural districts a burden which would be simply crushing. What would Cambridge gain – nothing unless it is made a County Borough. But with the population of Chesterton, Cherry Hinton and Newnham Croft added Cambridge would still be short of the 50,000 requisite to form a County Borough – John Bester

1902 08 25

The growth of the population in Cambridge is not keeping pace with the building of houses and in various parts many houses are constantly empty. But the absence of overcrowding is in the highest degree beneficial, not only to public health, but to the public morals as well. The housing problem is one of the most difficult of the day and the proportion of income which has to be paid as rent by artisans in the neighbourhood of London is so great as to make the problem of obtaining sufficient food almost insoluble. It is to be hoped that such a state of things will never exist in Cambridge

1904 09 03

Green Street, Cambridge would hardly be suspected of any pretensions to the romantic. Its well-ordered lodging-houses, the policemen who parade it and the milkmen who visit it, all seem to bar the entrance to anything more fanciful. Yet it is home to a Russian Pole, Mr Ignatius Knaster who became a political offender by the publication of a political pamphlet dealing with the conditions in Poland and was given the alternative of incarceration or banishment. 1904 09 03

1910

1912 03 29

Today the population of the Borough of Cambridge is 40,560. On Monday it will be 57,073. The extension of the boundary now brings in Chesterton and the urban portions of Trumpington, Cherry Hinton and Grantchester. These suburbs were inhabited almost entirely by people whose living lay in Cambridge but were separated from it by the River Cam or purely artificial borders. It means that the residents will now be under the care of the Cambridge Town Council. 12 03 29c

1914 09 18

Belgian refugees & p5

1914 10 16

Another trainload of wounded Belgian soldiers arrived at the station and were taken to the Hospital at Trinity College. Now 100 Belgian refugees are expected who will be housed temporarily in the Corn Exchange before they are found homes. Not many households can take a whole family but streets might share them. Professors from the University of Louvain professors have arrived and a room at the Engineering Laboratory made available for lectures

1914 10 23

Belgian refugees Sawston, Histon, concert, Huntingdon, list Cambridge names & where billeted; p3
Caxton Infectious Diseases Hospital to be used

1914 11 27

The Hospitality Committee for Belgian refugees has equipped four houses in which 55 refugees have been accommodated. They are 'Scotsdale' on Grantchester Road where a Flemish priest has been lodged with nine members of his family and 'South House' Barton Road which houses 14 members of doctor's family. A young lace maker and a family of eight from Louvain lodges at No.4 West View Newnham while at No.11 Brookside there are 22 refugees from Malines and Ostend. In Regent Street a studio has been converted into a fair-sized reading room where Dutch, French and English papers are supplied. * & p5

1915 11 03

Mrs Elizabeth Fanny Pryor has assisted Belgian refugees and organised flag days for other causes; warden of Primrose League – 15 11 03d

1916 05 10

Hugel homes for Belgian refugees – detailed report – 16 05 10d

1919 12 24

Cambridge and the Belgians – account of refugees – detailed report – 19 12 24a

1920

1927 01 18

H.L. Hughes spoke on how town planning could be improved. The last 100 years have seen an enormous increase in population and as a result town planning if not a problem for the future but more for the immediate present. The traffic, the sewers, the gas or electricity all have to be thought of. There are roads from the foot of the Gogs to Shelford and Stapleford which only contain one or two houses along them. Buses may pass the door but one has to go miles for a doctor, a church or a school. In a few years' time people will not live in such places and these houses will be left to fall down and spoil the approach to the town

1930

1930 04 30

Cambridge Guildhall was crowded with an audience chiefly composed of young men and women, but with a fair leavening of older folk, who had come to hear Dr Marie Stopes give an address on birth control. She spoke rapidly for an hour and replied to many questions. Thousands of mothers, having had three or four children, with perhaps only one year between them, finding it difficult to get sufficient food and worn out were in dread of another unwanted child. What was wanted was spaced babies from radiant mothers. Dr Stopes had been abused, insulted and misrepresented but she made people think and talk about birth control. 30 04 30a & b

1930 11 07

Mrs Emma Gunton is celebrating her 100th birthday; she is the second Cambridge lady this week to reach this wonderful age. She is remarkable: she walks without assistance, has her own teeth and eats her meals regularly. She has never had an illness and only required the attention of a doctor on one occasion she met with an accident. Born at Bottisham she possesses a fine memory and can recall the coming of railway trains. 30 11 07

1932 01 18

Cambridge suffered the loss of a centenarian with the death of Mrs Sarah Ann Howes of Glisson Road. She was a charming old lady with many interesting reminiscences. She attended the dinner on

Parker's Piece to celebrate the coronation of Queen Victoria and remembered the opening of the Cambridge railway station and her first journey to Ely by train. Things are very different today, she would say: the poor people are much better off than they were and people have more sympathy with each other. 32 01 18b

1932 03 30

The residential population of All Saints church in Cambridge is dwindling on account of commercial progress. Of 1,500 residents when the church was built, only 600 now remain due to the conversion of houses into shops and offices. The time is rapidly approaching when parishioners will have to consider the state of the church, the vestry meeting was warned. 32 03 30a

1933 05 22

The 1931 census report shows a population increase in Cambridgeshire of seven percent since 1921. The number of married women has increased assisted by the high marriage rate in recent years, despite the prevailing economic depression. The net result of all the new building, structural alteration and demolition has seen the number of dwellings rise by 13.7 per cent and the instances of 'overcrowding' has reduced notwithstanding a large increase in the numbers of families. 33 05 22c

1933 08 16

"Pakistan" name given and National movement founded by Choudray Rahmat Ali, Emmanuel college 1933 cTT 16.8.1947

1935 01 10

Who can claim the greatest number of living descendants? J. Haynes of Thoday Street says: "I am 80 and have eight children living. There are 37 grandchildren and 19 great grandchildren. My eldest daughter is 39 and the youngest great grandchild 14". Miss K. Brand of Gloucester Street says "My grandmother (87) has had 12 children; there are 62 grandchildren, 62 great grandchildren and three great-great grandchildren. 35 01 10

1935 12 16

Sir – the de-population of Castle End has brought a serious decline in trade in this district. Slum clearance has seen the departure of many young families to the new residential estates in other parts of Cambridge and we are left with the old people whose requirements are practically nil. When a house is vacant it is condemned and pulled down so consequently no new residents come to take their place. Some sites have been empty for years and are growing a plentiful supply of weeds and thistles. When are we going to have new houses built on these vacant sites – Tradesman 35 12 16

1937 06 09

A meeting at Cambridge Guildhall to raise funds for the Basque children's hostel at Pampisford brought several promises of 'adopting' children by guaranteeing fifteen shillings a week. There will be 29 young refugees at Pampisford Vicarage and volunteers were needed to do cleaning, carpentry and plumbing. Leah Manning described the terrible tragedy of Guernica and the conditions in Bilbao where everyone from the President to the poorest refugee had only black bread, coarse cabbage and a little rice to eat. 37 06 09a & b 37 06 12a

1937 06 23

Sir - The 29 Basque refugee children are now settled in the Vicarage at Pampisford after their ordeal in Spain. There have been heavy initial expenses in creating a home in an unfurnished house not designed for the purpose and insufficiently provided with sanitation. Several firms have supplied goods free or at cost prices and individuals have given their labour in repairing, painting and cleaning the Vicarage. We hope to employ a cook-housekeeper and charwoman as well as a part-time gardener to grow vegetables for the winter – F.M. Cornford. 37 06 23

1940

1940 03 21

German refugee offended under aliens' regulations – 40 03 21a

1941 01 23

First wedding of refugees in synagogue – 41 01 23a

1945 05 03

Jewish refugees should stay, says meeting – 45 05 03

1947 05 19 c

"However any calamities the war brought, it brought one great saving - it has resulted in closer relations between England and Poland than ever before in history. The Poles have 'discovered' the English, and learned to appreciate their great qualities, and in the same way many English people have 'discovered' the Poles. This opinion was expressed in Cambridge on Saturday by Dr Z. Lubienski, lecturer in the department of education, Cambridge University, when he addressed members of the Cambridge Women's Luncheon Club, after a luncheon in the Dorothy Cafe.

1947 12 11 c

Separated from their own families on St Nicholas Day which in Poland, being the day of the patron saint of children, is celebrated with childrens' parties, the 200 Poles at the Agricultural camp at Cherry Hinton did the next best thing . They gave a Christmas party for English children, entertaining about 75 youngsters from the village at their hostel in Walpole Road. The Poles, who have been doing agricultural work since they were demobilised about six months ago, gave up their sweet ration for two weeks and part of their special Christmas allowance to provide the tea. During the meal the kiddies were entertained with lively Polish folk songs, played on two accordions and to Polish carols sung by the newly formed hostel choir

1949 03 04 c

Speaking to a crowded assembly at the opening of the Free Poles Club in St Andrew's Hall, Emmanuel Road, Cambridge the Vice Chancellor described the need for friendly relations between Britons and the Free Poles in this country, as a step which would foster inter-national harmony. The club is open not only to Poles all over the country but to anyone showing interest in Anglo-Polish relationship

1950

1951 04 14

The results of the census is awaited with particular interest locally. Because if it shows that the population of Cambridge has greatly increased, it might well be that the city would be in a position to apply for county borough status. Before it can put forward a claim a town must have a population of at least 100,000. County boroughs are completely self-contained local authorities, exercising all local government functions within their area. If Cambridge were to be granted this new status the city council would be very largely masters in their own house, a state of affairs what cannot be said to exist at the present moment owing to the rate demands of the county

1953 12 30

From 1953 have Polish culture lessons St Albans School ©CEN 30.12.1976

1955 02 09

When the 1951 census was take a record was made of birthplace and nationalities. From a total population in Cambridgeshire of 166,887, 158,383 were English born while 2,112 came from Scotland, 1,613 from Wales and 1,151 from the Irish Republic. There were 318 people born in the colonies and 6,476 from foreign countries including 3,757 aliens. Whereas 63 per cent of the population of the Isle of Ely were born in the county, only 47 per cent of Huntingdonshire residents were actually born there thus illustrating the expansion of the population by immigration 55 02 09

1956 03 24

The University Pakistan Association celebrated the country's first Republic Day with a visit to the Cambridge cemetery to lay wreaths and say 'Fateha' (Moslem funeral prayers) at the grave of Chaudhri Rahmat Ali, the man who first coined the word Pakistan (meaning 'the Land of the Pure'). Mr Ali lived here for a number of years and died about five years ago. The day was rounded off by a Grand Mogul Dinner at the Taj Mahal restaurant. 56 03 24c

1958 09 24

Miss Mary Cattley was Headmistress of the Perse School for Girls from 1926-1947. She introduced the house system, saw the building of the new school block in 1930, the establishment of the games field and the river bathing place which was acquired in 1934. During the war the school welcomed refugee girls from Europe, many of whom have married and settled down in Cambridge. 58 09 24

1959 12 20 c

Trumpington industrial hostel is one of the few remaining hostels opened in 1947 to accommodate Poles from the Polish Resettlement Corps on the transfer to civilian status. It has continued as an industrial hostel with Polish residents numbering more than half the total. The 130 residents are employed locally but it is a costly business and it will shortly be closed. Many of those displaced will probably find lodgings with other Polish workers who have homes in the neighbourhood.

1960

1961 02 04

Three years ago there were perhaps one or two West Indians working in Cambridge. Now the number must fast be approaching 100. They have all been invited by the Cambridge Brotherhood to attend their international service at the Mill Road Baptist Church when the address will be delivered by Canon Hay, the Chaplain appointed by the Anglican Church to serve Jamaican immigrants. The invitation is extended to all friends and includes a social gathering after the service 61 02 04a

1961 02 09

Many of Cambridge's 350-strong Polish community found it difficult finding work and places to live in the early post war years. They keep Polish customs and festivities and there are clubs which provide entertainment in the form of plays and dances. The boys have a Scout group, there are Guides and Brownies and a men's choirs. The Catholics have a weekly service, those of the Evangelical and Greek Orthodox are less frequent. The children are bi-lingual and many speak better than their classmates. Would they like to go back? No. Conditions are too hard in Poland where the cost of living is treble what it is here and the vast majority are now British subjects 61 02 09b

1962 01 02

The school population in Cambridge has increased by 80 per cent since 1939. Council houses have been built in large numbers leading to a movement of population into new estates and new schools could not be provided in time. Serious overcrowding of infants classes reached a peak in 1953 and spread on to secondary schools in 1957. Over-large classes have been unavoidable and children are taught in halls, dining rooms and even store rooms. 62 01 02 & a

1962 01 19

West Indians in Cambridge are having difficulty in finding a clubroom in which they can meet. At a social evening in the Romsey Labour Hall over 50 were present to dance, listen to calypso music and meet new friends from the British Commonwealth. Many of the 150 West Indians at present in the city would be keen to join a club of their own and others would travel from Ipswich 62 01 19a

1963 06 18

Steps are being taken to solve the problems of the current increase in the West Indian working population of Cambridge. Though small, the increase in the number of coloured people is causing

problems of housing, child care and general social welfare. Housing is one problem: often the only way they can make ends meet is to fill the house with many paying tenants. When both parents go out to work there are difficulties with getting child care facilities 63 06 18

1965 05 01

County Development Plan rejected by Minister with plans to limit Cambridge population to 100,000 and place virtual bans on all industry – 65 05 01

1966 01 12

By year 2000 the population of Cambridge and area within six miles may have doubled from present size of 300,000 and light industrial development may be firmly established. High-speed roads will bypass a star-shaped city with network of cycle tracks, says City architect, Gordon Logie – 66 01 12

1966 02 25

Mill Road becoming a coloured area – organisation to give practical help to immigrants – 66 02 25, a

1966 06 28

450 Poles in Cambridge; mark 1000 years Christianity in Poland φCEN 18.6 & 20.6.1966

1967 08 11

Colour prejudice in Cambridge – difficulty of accommodation, feature – 67 08 11

1970

1972 04 17

Population stats, p6

1972 12 08

Polish Polonia House registered as club, raised £28,000 to buy φCEN 8.12.1972

1974 12 16

This year for the first time in more than 30 years a group of Polish people will have a family-style Christmas in their own homes. After the war they arrived in this country as displaced persons or refugees. Because they were sick, they were admitted to mental hospitals, and they did not learn the English language. The new house, bought by the British Council for Aid to Refugees, has been simply but comfortably furnished. As a group, they are now working out what they will have for Christmas dinner. The occasion marks the beginning of a new life

1976 11 23

There are now more than 1,000 Italians in Cambridge; the largest immigrant group in the city. Apart from a few prisoners-of-war who stayed on after 1945, the majority arrived in the 50s and 60s. Many have earned enough to start their own businesses and establish their own homes. The head of one Italian family says that with 88 hours a week spent on running a continental corner shop and bakery there is not much time for family or social life. He emigrated from Naples in 1961 to achieve a standard of living in which he could raise a family. His first job was in a college kitchen but he soon launched his own business from a bed-sit room supplying bread and cakes to the growing Italian communities from Nottingham to London and Ipswich.

1978 03 31

20 Asian families settled after Amins expulsions φCEN 31.3.78

1980

1981 03 17

Nine Vietnamese boat refugees φCEN 17.3.1981

1982 01 30

Polish community protest over Solidarity sentences φCEN 30.1.1982

1983 03 17

Vietnamese - about 30 families φCEN 17.3.1983

1988 11 23

Cambridge's large Polish community celebrated 40 years in the city at the Polonia Club in Chesterton Road. They have built up an impressive network of activities ranging from a drama society and folk song ensemble called Klosy to a school founded in 1952 to teach Polish language and culture. When Josef Mazur came in 1947 the only employment open to Poles was labouring, work in the mines or domestic positions. The older members of the community are suspicious that youngsters will not uphold the traditions. 88 11 23c

1989 02 23

Pakistan ambassador honours Chaudri Rahnat Ali – 89 02 23

1990

1996 12 31 c

The Cambridge Polish community has a simple though to reflect upon. Fascism drove them out of their country and brought them to Britain & the advent of communism back home kept them here when the war ended. Poles like Henio Muszynski and Czeslaw Rataj, young infantrymen in 1945 recall the camaraderie of a post-war further education camp at Fowlmere where many were taught English and eased into British life. Cultural and social activities thrived; there was dancing and drama, “but we would just hire a place so that people would meet every week to talk Polish and just play cards”, said Mr Muszynski. Four years ago the community raised the money needed to buy a three-story club house in Chesterton Road. It has 300 members and is a comfortably furnished piece of Poland in Cambridge.